

**OFFICE OF STATE ETHICS' STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF  
RAISED BILL No. 771  
AN ACT CONCERNING  
THE GOVERNANCE OF THE CITIZEN'S ETHICS ADVISORY BOARD**

The primary purpose of this bill is to provide critical revisions to the Codes of Ethics concerning the governance of the Citizen's Ethics Advisory Board ("CEAB"). The Office of State Ethics ("OSE") supports passage of Raised Bill No. 771, and respectfully requests that the following comments be considered.

The CEAB is the governing body of the Office of State Ethics ("OSE"), which is statutorily tasked with the interpretation of the Codes of Ethics through the issuance of Advisory Opinions and adjudication of ethics enforcement matters brought under the ethics laws. Members of the CEAB hail from all areas of the state and all walks of life. The CEAB cannot act unless it has a quorum of six members. Pursuant to recently amended section 1-82 and section 1-83 of the general statutes, the CEAB members must be physically present in order to vote on whether a violation of the Codes of Ethics has occurred. Lack of a quorum in CEAB proceedings would have devastating consequences to the operations of the agency. In 2008, the CEAB issued nine Advisory Opinions, approved 41 audits of registered client and communicator lobbyists, and was responsible for overseeing numerous settlements and Uniform Administrative Procedures Act (UAPA) Hearing matters related to disclosures. In addition, there are currently many pending enforcement matters that can potentially lead to adjudicatory board hearings, requiring the CEAB to act as the fact finder.

The proposed revisions to the governance of the CEAB presented in Raised Bill No. 771 will minimize the possibility of a lack of a quorum and provide for more gradual replacement of its members through a staggering of terms. Therefore, the OSE supports the language in section 2 of Raised Bill No. 771, which alternates CEAB appointments, commencing on October 1, 2009. Currently four of the nine CEAB members' terms will expire in 2009, while none are scheduled to expire in 2010. This amendment would alter the replacement of members, so that only two, and in one instance three, members would be replaced each year. Such revision to the general statutes will ensure that the CEAB is able to gather a quorum of six members during its proceedings.

The OSE also supports the language in section 1 of Raised Bill No. 771 that excludes from the term "public office" a justice of the peace or a notary public and thus permits such individuals to serve on the CEAB. The language in essence mirrors a similar provision that is found in the elections statutes. This amendment to the term "public office" will expand the pool of qualified candidates who could be eligible to serve on the CEAB, without diluting the conflict of interest requirements for such appointments.

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